sex, descent, place of birth, residence or any of them. Since recruitment is not made on the basis of race, community, religion, place of birth, etc., no religion-wise data relating to Central Govearnment employees is maintained.

Legislation for reservation of Seats in Parliament and State Legislatures for OBCs

1183. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to bring forward a legislation for reservation of seats in Parliament and State Legislatures for the members belonging to OBC category; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor and in what manner Government propose to improve the representation of OBCs in State Legislatures and Parliament?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b) No such proposal is under consideration of the Government. Legislation for reservation of seats in Parliament and State Legislatures for OBCs is a policy matter and may require detailed consultation with the political parties for arriving at a consensus amongst other things before a view is taken by the Government in this regard.

Constitutional Benefits to SCs for Conversion

1184. SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state the steps Government have taken to extend the Constitutional benefits available to Scheduled Castes to converts from these Castes to Christiantiy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): The matter is being examined alongwith all such proposals received from various States Union Territory Administration in the light of modalities approved by the Cabinet Committee on Scheduled

Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Minorities on 15.06.1999. No time can be specified as proposals are received from time to time and processed in accordance with prescribed procedure.

Increase in Number of Beggars

1185. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of beggars are increasing day-by-day in the country;

(b) if so, the details of increase in begging during each of the last five year, category-wise and State-wise;

(c) whether Government propose to formulate any programme to rescue the beggar children from such exploitation and ensure education and protection to them; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b) The information on beggars and/or increase in their number is not maintained by this Ministry as the subject is dealt with by the State Government under their respective Anti Beggary Laws. However, according to a report of the Registrar General of India, the total number of beggars in 1991 in the country (except Jammu & Kashmir) was 544048, out of which, number of male Beggars was 333334 and that of famale beggars was 210714. A statement showing the State-wise population of Vagrant, Beggars etc. in the country (except Jammu & Kashmir) is annexed. (*See* below)

(c) and (d) Beggars home under Anti Beggary Law or under any other scheme, are established by the State Governments/UT Administrations. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has schemes for Street Children and delinquent juveniles which include child beggars for giving grant in aid to State Governments and Non Governmental Organisations for providing Institutional and Non-Institutional basic services for the care, protection, vocational education and development of children facing destitution, neglect, abuse and exploitation.